

STEVE STRICKER (-7)

Q. Incredible round, 63, no bogeys on that card.

STEVE STRICKER: I just managed my game well, I think, today. Difficult day. It's got some -- we got some wind, and the breeze picked up especially on the second nine, but really kept it in play for the most part. A couple good up-and-downs that kept the momentum going. Yeah, had a good opportunity to make another one on the last but missed it, but all in all, a really good round.

Q. How much did that final round at American Family at your tournament that you hosted, how much did that play a factor here today?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, you know, finishing seventh played a factor. I want to win that thing. I like being there, being the host for the event, but I would love to win in Madison. Jerry's back-to-back years there, yeah, it fueled me for sure. I had a good final round, but I haven't been putting like I'm accustomed to putting, so I've been really grinding on that a lot at home, changing grips and putters all over the place. I got a new grip on the putter this week, but we'll see. It's kind of I'm working at it. It hasn't been great, but today was good.

Q. Talking about the putting and the grip change, had you been working with that grip beforehand or was this the first time to try that oversized grip?

STEVE STRICKER: Actually, I had that grip on when I won at the Chubb and I really didn't feel like I putted all that great with it at the Chubb.

Q. And you took it off?

STEVE STRICKER: I took it off.

Q. That makes sense.

STEVE STRICKER: But I've been working with it at home quite a bit back and forth. Even with the arm lock, that seems to be gaining popularity and I feel pretty good with that, too. I'm a left dominant sided putter, left arm putter, so even the arm lock feels good to me, but that's another level. So I've been going the other way and putting this grip on and that feels pretty good. It seems to have made my misses a lot tighter.

Q. You talked about Jerry Kelly winning back to back. You know there's a way in not having to do that, that's your tournament, you can not invite him.

STEVE STRICKER: Exactly.

Q. We'll get started with Steve Stricker here. What was going well for you today?

STEVE STRICKER: You know, I got off to a good start. We played those first three holes straight into the wind and I birdied 11 with a nice shot in there and then holed it out of the bunker at 12, so I felt like I stole one there at 12. Just played pretty solid. It's a good golf course. You have to really pay attention here. You've got to put it in play off the tee, which I did for the most part today. And I putted well, so all in all, I did everything -- I did everything pretty well.

Q. Fast starts and low rounds are nothing new for you here. You've had both throughout your career. Do you take that as a good omen today?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah. I've got to continue on with that. I haven't won here at Firestone, so I've gotten off to some good starts here before and I've just got to keep 'er going. Just keep playing with the confidence level that I played with today and keep trying to hit the shots that I hit today and just play smart when I have to and be aggressive when I have that opportunity, and I feel good about being aggressive.

Q. Could you just run down your birdie for us?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah. Started on the back, hit a 6-iron in there to about four feet. Holed it out of the left bunker at 12. Par 5 16, driver, laid up and then had 80 yards and hit it in there about three feet. No. 17 I made about a -- it was a 3-wood and an 8-iron, about a 20-footer. No. 18 was a 3-wood and a wedge to about 15 feet. No. 3, 3-wood off the tee, sand wedge to probably three feet. And then the par -- yeah, another driver and a lob wedge, I had 86 yards I think to about three feet.

Q. I'm guessing this 64 was your previous low here, wasn't it?

STEVE STRICKER: Was it? I don't know.

Q. According to our calculations.

STEVE STRICKER: All right.

Q. So 63 --

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, good start.

Q. Only two off the course record.

STEVE STRICKER: Oh, really? Well, we're playing up a few tees, I don't know how accurate that is.

Q. How much did the wind pick up over your second nine?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, it got obviously windier as the day went on. There was a little bit of breeze right away at the start and then it progressively kept picking up, especially on our second nine, which is the front. Coming down the stretch was blowing pretty good.

Q. (Inaudible) person who was putting (inaudible) because I think people would be surprised (inaudible) really good putter.

STEVE STRICKER: I've just been struggling with my putting, the consistency of it. I'll putt good one day and just putt awful another day. Just I feel good over it, so I've been messing around a lot at home with the arm lock, even this wrist grip that I've got going now, so I've been putzing around with that a lot at home. I played with the grip that I'm playing with now at the Chubb, won with it but didn't continue on with it. I just didn't like the way it felt really. I gave it another chance. I putt with it at home and it feels a little bit more solid, my misses are tighter. So it's something I'm always trying to improve on, trying to get a little bit better at.

I just haven't been feeling that great on the greens lately and today was a good day. I putted well, I cleaned up nicely, I made all my little three-, four-, five-footers and those are what keeps the round going. That's what I haven't been doing. I've been playing some good rounds, but then I'll get going sideways a little bit and start missing these putts and then that's just a momentum killer, and today I didn't do that, so I was just able to keep that rolling.

Q. I guess at least today you're glad you didn't go to Hartford?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah. Well, a 63 at Hartford would have been good, too.